

Blindness

India is home to 20 percent of the global blind population. The Census 2011 heavily undercounts the country's blind population at 5.32 million.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 defines blindness as a condition where a person has any of the following conditions, after best correction,

- Total absence of sight
- Visual acuity less than 3/60
- Limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of less than 10 degree

Prevalent portrayals of ill-conceived notions on blindness have created a stigma around this disability in the minds of the general population. Persons with vision impairment are often expected to have a 'sixth sense' to gaze into the future. They are also expected to be great singers!

Whether it's the legend of the 'blind bard' in Western literature or the references to blindness in Indian mythology, 'blindness' has featured in similar ways across civilizations; Almost enforcing the stereotype of the blind person being compensated for eyesight with wisdom.

Homer, the creator of the Greek epic, 'Iliad', was blind. So was John Milton who wrote the famous, 'Paradise Lost'. Closer to home, Surdas was the well-known blind bard in the court of Akbar. One of the central characters in Mahabharata, who is physically blind as well as 'blinded' by the love of his son, is King Dhritrashtra.

Point being, blindness has been a constant in films, texts, television et cetera.

However blind and visually impaired people have been defying the stereotypical perceptions that color the societal mindset. Thanks to technological innovation, they can actively participate in all mainstream activities including employment, education, sports, travel, and entertainment and so on.

Blind people use

- Braille displays and screen readers to read written material and use computers and mobile devices,
- Speech to text applications to enable them to work, study and live independently.
- Guide dogs or white/smart canes for a greater sense of independence and to navigate their surroundings with more ease.

We have famous entrepreneurs, sport persons, media personalities, tech innovators, all persons with vision impairment. Clearly, sky's the limit for them!

Here is a [list of 10 NGOS](#) working for persons with visual impairment in India.